

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 7, 8, 15, 43, 57, 59 and 61 through 63 to read as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A distance-measuring device for individually measuring a plurality of individual distances distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of distance-measured regions, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, the distance-measuring device comprising:

a selection circuit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value from the plurality of individually measured distance-values, to the plurality of distance-measured regions, wherein the selection is effected, in response to a determination that a plurality of second measured distance-values of the individually measured distance-values are not smaller than a predetermined distance-value, by excluding the plurality of second measured distance-values such that in the case that more than one of the plurality of distance-values have been determined to be greater than or equal to a predetermined distance-value, all of the plurality of distance-values that have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are excluded and all other distance-values of the plurality of distance-values are not excluded; and

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

2. (Previously presented) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein said computation circuit sets the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value in response to a determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.

3. (Previously presented) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein said computation circuit computes the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

4. (Previously presented) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein said computation circuit computes the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

5. (Original) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from a focal distance of a lens used for auto-focusing.

6. (Original) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein the predetermined distance value is obtained from an aperture value of a lens used for auto-focusing.

7. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, wherein a smallest measured distance-value serves as the auto-focusing data value when all of the plurality of distance-values the measured distance-values to the plurality of

distance-measured regions are not smaller than have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value and are not selected by the selection circuit.

8. (Currently Amended) A camera including a distance-measuring device for individually measuring a plurality of individual distances distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of distance-measured regions, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, said camera comprising:

a selection circuit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value from the plurality of individually measured distance-values, to the plurality of distance-measured regions; wherein the selection is effected, in response to a determination that a plurality of second measured distance-values of the individually measured distance-values are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, by excluding the plurality of second measured distance-values such that in the case that more than one of the plurality of distance-values have been determined to be greater than or equal to a predetermined distance-value, all of the plurality of distance-values that have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are excluded and all other distance-values of the plurality of distance-values are not excluded;

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one first measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit; and

a driving circuit for driving an image-forming lens in accordance with the auto-focusing data value computed by the computation circuit.

9. (Previously presented) A camera according to Claim 8, wherein said computation circuit sets the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value in response to a determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.

10-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently amended) A method of individually measuring a plurality of individual distances distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of distance-measured regions by a distance-measuring device, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, said method comprising the steps of:

selecting at least one first measured distance-value from the plurality of individually measured distance-values, to the plurality of distance-measured regions, wherein the selection is effected, in response to a determination that a plurality of second measured distance-values of the individually measured distance-values are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, by excluding the plurality of second measured distance-values such that in the case that more than one of the plurality of distance-values have been determined to be greater than or equal to a predetermined distance-value, all of the plurality of

distance-values that have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are excluded and all other distance-values of the plurality of distance-values are not excluded; and

computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

16. (Previously presented) A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein said computing step includes setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value in response to a determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.

17. (Previously presented) A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein said computing step includes computing the auto-focusing data value from a mean value of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

18. (Previously presented) A measuring method according to Claim 15, wherein said computing step includes computing the auto-focusing data value from a majority of the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

19-42. (Cancelled)

43. (Currently Amended) A computer usable medium for use with a distance-measuring device for individually measuring a plurality of individual distances distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of distance-measured regions, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, said computer usable medium having computer readable program code units embodied therein comprising:

a first program code unit for selecting at least one first measured distance-value from the plurality of individually measured distance-values, to the plurality of distance-measured regions, wherein the selection is effected, in response to a determination that a plurality of second measured distance-values of the individually measured distance-values are not smaller than a predetermined distance value, by excluding the plurality of second measured distance-values such that in the case that more than one of the plurality of distance-values have been determined to be greater than or equal to a predetermined distance-value, all of the plurality of distance-values that have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value are excluded and all other distance-values of the plurality of distance-values are not excluded; and

a second program code unit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the selected at least one first measured distance-value.

44. (Previously presented) A computer usable medium according to Claim 43, wherein the second program code unit includes a program code unit for setting the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value in response to a

determination that the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.

45-56. (Cancelled)

57. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device for individually measuring a plurality of individual distances distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of distance-measured regions, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, the distance-measuring device comprising:

a selection circuit for selecting at least one measured distance-value for use in focusing, wherein the selection is effected by comparing a first measured distance-value of a the plurality of individually measured distance-values to a predetermined distance value, and wherein if the first measured distance-value is not smaller than greater than or equal to the predetermined distance value, said selection circuit compares a second measured distance-value of the plurality of individually measured distance-values to the predetermined distance value and excludes the first measured distance-value from being selected; and

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit,

wherein if the second measured distance-value is not smaller than greater than or equal to the predetermined distance value, said selection circuit excludes the second measured distance-value from being selected, and

wherein said selection circuit excludes all of the plurality of distance-values that have been determined to be greater than or equal to the predetermined distance-value and does not exclude any other distance-values of the plurality of distance-values and selects a third measured distance-value of the plurality of individually measured distance-values.

58. (Cancelled)

59. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 57, further comprising an ordering circuit for ordering into a predetermined order the plurality of individually measured distance-values before said selection circuit performs the selection.

60. (Previously presented) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 57, wherein said computation circuit sets the auto-focusing data value to a value equal to a minimum permissible distance value when the computed auto-focusing data value is smaller than the minimum permissible distance value.

61. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 1, further comprising an ordering circuit for ordering into a predetermined order the plurality of individually measured distance-values,

wherein said selection circuit performs the selection and exclusion upon the ordered plurality of individually measured distance-values in accordance with the predetermined order.

62. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device for individually measuring a plurality of individual distances distance-values corresponding to a respective plurality of distance-measured regions, the plurality of distance-measured regions constituting all distance-measurable regions of the distance-measuring device, the distance-measuring device comprising:

a selection circuit which selects, from the plurality of distance-values, at least one measured distance-value, between the shortest distance-value where focusing operation is possible and a predetermined distance-value, regardless of without taking into account the position in the image plane of the plurality of distance-measured regions; and

a computation circuit for computing an auto-focusing data value in accordance with the at least one measured distance-value selected by said selection circuit.

63. (Currently Amended) A distance-measuring device according to Claim 62, wherein when said selection circuit selects a plurality of measured distance-values, and said computation circuit performs the computation of the auto-focusing data value as the average of the plurality of measured selected distance-values.